



# The Fact Is...

## Problem/Pathological Gambling

- ✓ An addiction to gambling is very similar, both physically and psychologically, to an addiction to a substance.
- ✓ The estimated annual social costs of problem gambling to Oregonians is approximately \$468 million, while we are only spending about \$4 million per year to treat and prevent the problem.
- ✓ Of those that received publicly funded treatment in Oregon in 2009-2010, the average reported gambling debt was nearly \$30,000.
- ✓ It is estimated that there are 74,000 adult Oregonians who are problem/pathological gamblers. Washington County residents account for over 12,000 of them. Now consider that each problem/pathological gambler affects anywhere from 6 to 12 other people.
- ✓ 62% of gamblers enrolled in treatment in Washington County reported that their game of preference was video poker. Slots accounted for 25%.
- ✓ Of those who completed treatment, 86% stopped or reduced their gambling.
- ✓ The latest data (2010) on Oregon students shows that gambling starts as early as sixth grade, and that youth who gamble are much more likely to be involved in risky behaviors, such as drinking alcohol and using drugs.
- ✓ Compared to other addictions, gamblers have higher rates of suicide. Over 10% of those in treatment had attempted suicide one or more times in the past six months.
- ✓ In Oregon, one must be 18 years old to legally play traditional lottery games, participate in charitable gaming, or participate in pari-mutuel betting (i.e. bet at the horse track)
- ✓ In Oregon, one must be 21 years old to legally play video lottery (including video poker and video slots), and bet at tribal casinos.
- ✓ If gambling has become a problem, treatment in Washington County is free, confidential and effective. Call LifeWorks Northwest, for treatment services, at **503/645-9010**.
- ✓ If you would like additional referral information, educational materials, or an on-site presentation, contact Washington County's Problem Gambling Outreach Program at, **503/846-4903**.

